

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 14 and 27 as follows, and please cancel claim 24 without prejudice to continued prosecution. The claims and their status are shown below.

1-13. (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing solidified maltitol, wherein said process comprises the following steps:

a) turbulating a quantity A of maltitol powder and a quantity B of a maltitol-containing syrup in a stream of air in a fluid bed at a temperature between about 20°C and a second temperature at which the maltitol powder is still solid, wherein the quantity A is greater than or equal to the quantity B so as to obtain a coated maltitol product, wherein the gas is nitrogen and/or air and the temperature of the gas is from 80°C to 95°C,

b) drying the coated maltitol product in a fluid bed to obtain a granulated maltitol product,

c) reducing the particle size of the granulated maltitol product to produce solidified maltitol, wherein the content of maltitol in the solidified maltitol is from about 92% w/w to about 97% w/w based on dry substance, and

d) recycling all or a portion of said solidified maltitol into step a) as powder of maltitol.

15. (Canceled).

16. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein a gas is used for the turbulating step.

17. (Previously presented) The process of claim 16, wherein said gas is nitrogen or air.

18. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein the drying of the coated maltitol product is carried out with a gas having a temperature between 20°C and a second temperature at which the maltitol powder is still solid.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein the maltitol-containing syrup comprises a dry substance content of from about 40% to about 80% and a maltitol content of equal to or greater than about 70% based on dry substance.

21. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein the temperature in step a) is between about 50°C and said second temperature.

22. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein the temperature in step a) is between about 70°C and said second temperature.

23. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein the temperature in step a) is between about 80°C and said second temperature.

24-25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously presented) The process of claim 14, wherein the content of maltitol in the solidified maltitol of step c) is from about 94% w/w to about 96% w/w based on dry substance.

27. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing solidified maltitol, wherein said process comprises the following steps:

- a) loading maltitol powder into a fluid bed basket;
- b) providing a gas having an inlet temperature between about 80°C and the melting temperature of the maltitol powder;
- c) adding a maltitol syrup into a feeding basket of the fluid bed, wherein said maltitol syrup has a dry substance content of about 70%;
- d) spraying said maltitol syrup onto the maltitol powder to obtain a coated maltitol product, wherein the maltitol syrup is sprayed onto the maltitol powder through a nozzle using said gas;
- e) drying said coated maltitol product to obtain a granulated maltitol product having a moisture content of less than about 1%;
- f) milling said granulated maltitol product to obtain solidified maltitol; and
- g) recycling a part or all of said solidified maltitol into step a) ~~until the solidified maltitol obtained in step f) has a maltitol content of from about 95% to about 98%,~~ wherein step g) is repeated until the solidified maltitol obtained in step f) has a maltitol content of from about 92 ~~[[85]]~~% (w/w) to about 97% (w/w).

28. (Previously presented) The process of claim 27, wherein said gas is air.

29. (Previously presented) The process of claim 27, wherein said gas inlet temperature is between about 90°C and about 95°C.

30. (Previously presented) The process of claim 27, wherein said granulated maltitol product has a moisture content of less than about 0.5%.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Previously presented) The process of claim 27, wherein step g) is repeated until the solidified maltitol obtained in step f) has a maltitol content of from about 95.5% to about 96.5%.

33. (Previously presented) Solidified maltitol made by the process of claim 14.

34. (Previously presented) A feed, food, pharma or cosmetic product comprising the solidified maltitol of claim 33.

35. (Previously presented) The product of claim 34, wherein said food product is selected from the group consisting of a bakery product, a tablet, a confectionery, chewing gum, and a coated edible core.

36. (Previously presented) The tablet of claim 35, wherein said tablet comprises between about 2% and about 100% of the solidified maltitol of claim 33.

37. (Previously presented) A bakery product comprising flour, fat, and a sweetening agent, wherein the sweetening agent comprises from about 25% to about 100% of the solidified maltitol of claim 33.